

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

CARL WU,

Plaintiff,

- against -

JONATHAN SIMKHAI INC.

Defendant.

Docket No. 1:17-cv-6896

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

**COMPLAINT**

Plaintiff Carl Wu (“Wu” or “Plaintiff”) by and through his undersigned counsel, as and for his Complaint against Defendant Jonathan Simkhai Inc. (“Simkhai” or “Defendant”) hereby alleges as follows:

**NATURE OF THE ACTION**

1. This is an action for copyright infringement under Section 501 of the Copyright Act. This action arises out of Defendant’s unauthorized reproduction and public display of a copyrighted photograph of American fashion model Gigi Hadid owned and registered by Wu, a New York based professional photographer. Accordingly, Wu seeks monetary relief under the Copyright Act of the United States, as amended, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*

**JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

2. This claim arises under the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*, and this Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1338(a).

3. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because Defendant resides and/or transacts business in New York.

4. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b).

### **PARTIES**

5. Wu is a professional photographer in the business of licensing his photographs to online and print media for a fee, having a usual place of business at 128 Fort Washington Avenue, Apt. 4C, New York, New York 10032.

6. Upon information and belief, Simkhai is a domestic business corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of New York, with a place of business at 252 West 37<sup>th</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, New York New York 10018. At all times material hereto, Simkhai has operated their Twitter and Facebook account at the URL's: [www.Twitter.com/JonathanSimkhai](http://www.Twitter.com/JonathanSimkhai) and [www.Facebook.com/pg/Jonathansimkhainyc](http://www.Facebook.com/pg/Jonathansimkhainyc) (the "Websites").

### **STATEMENT OF FACTS**

#### **A. Background and Plaintiff's Ownership of the Photograph**

7. Wu photographed American fashion model Gigi Hadid (the "Photograph"). A true and correct copy of the Photograph is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

8. Wu is the author of the Photograph and has at all times been the sole owner of all right, title and interest in and to the Photograph, including the copyright thereto.

9. The Photograph has a pending United States Copyright Office number of 1-5782971891.

#### **B. Defendant's Infringing Activities**

10. On or about June 28, 2017, Simkhai copied the Photograph and placed it on the Websites. See <https://twitter.com/JonathanSimkhai/status/880188045588275201> and <https://www.facebook.com/jonathansimkhainyc/photos/a.319271033009.152256.319244293009/>

10155577310903010/?type=3&theater . The Websites prominently featured the Photograph. A true and correct copy of the Websites with the Photograph are attached hereto as Exhibit B.

11. Simkhai did not license the Photograph from Plaintiff for its Websites, nor did Simkhai have Plaintiff's permission or consent to publish the Photograph on its Websites.

**CLAIM FOR RELIEF**  
**(COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT AGAINST SIMKHAJ)**  
**(17 U.S.C. §§ 106, 501)**

12. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1-11 above.

13. Simkhai infringed Plaintiff's copyright in the Photograph by reproducing and publicly displaying the Photograph on the Websites. Simkhai is not, and has never been, licensed or otherwise authorized to reproduce, publically display, distribute and/or use the Photograph.

14. The acts of Defendant complained of herein constitute infringement of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright in violation of Sections 106 and 501 of the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. §§ 106 and 501.

15. Upon information and belief, the foregoing acts of infringement by Simkhai have been willful, intentional, and purposeful, in disregard of and indifference to Plaintiff's rights.

16. As a direct and proximate cause of the infringement by the Defendant of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright, Plaintiff is entitled to damages and defendant's profits pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(b) for the infringement.

17. Alternatively, Plaintiff is entitled to statutory damages up to \$150,000 per work infringed for Defendant's willful infringement of the Photograph, pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(c).

18. Plaintiff further is entitled to her attorney's fees and full costs pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505.

**PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests judgment as follows:

1. That Defendant Simkhai be adjudged to have infringed upon Plaintiff's copyrights in the Photograph in violation of 17 U.S.C §§ 106 and 501;
2. Plaintiff be awarded either: a) Plaintiff's actual damages and Defendant's profits, gains or advantages of any kind attributable to Defendant's infringement of Plaintiff's Photograph; or b) alternatively, statutory damages of up to \$150,000 per copyrighted work infringed pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504;
3. That Defendant be required to account for all profits, income, receipts, or other benefits derived by Defendant as a result of its unlawful conduct;
4. That Plaintiff be awarded his costs, expenses and attorneys' fees pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505;
5. That Plaintiff be awarded pre-judgment interest; and
6. Such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

**DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL**

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable in accordance with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 38(b).

Dated: Valley Stream, New York  
September 11, 2017

LIEBOWITZ LAW FIRM, PLLC

By: /s/Richard Liebowitz  
Richard P. Liebowitz  
11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 305  
Valley Stream, NY 11580  
Tel: (516) 233-1660  
RL@LiebowitzLawFirm.com

*Attorneys for Plaintiff Carl Wu*